Issue of Currency Notes/Coins depicting Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

719. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVESHANKAR DAVE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian currency notes and coins depicting Gandhiji, Pt. Nehru and Netaji Subhash Chander Bose were issued in recognition of their services in the freedom struggle of India;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to issue similar notes/ Coins depicting Sardar Vallabhabhai Patel during the Golden Jubilee of the Independence of India in recognition of his services to the freedom struggle and also his contribution after Independence; and

(c) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) Government has taken a policy decision against printing of currency notes with any Portrait other than that of the Father of the Nation, Mathama Gandhi. Accordingly, Government has not issued any currency notes depicting Pandit Nehru, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

However, the Government has already issued in the past commemorative coins in respect of Pandit Nehru, Netji Subhash Chandra Bose and also Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in recognition of their services to the freedom struggle and contribution to the nation.

Demand of United Forum of Bank Unions and Insurance Companies

720. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the United Forum of Bank Unions and insurance companies have decided to go on strike and if so, what are the details of their demands; and

(b) what is the Government's reaction in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) Indian Banks Association have reported that they have not received any notice of strike from the Officers Organisations or Workmen

Unions individually or from United Forum of Bank Unions. However, notice of strike has been received from the employees of LIC, GIC and its subsidiaries for going on a strike against the consideration and passing of Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Bill, 1999 (IRDA). This Bill has already been considered and passed by the Lok Sabha on 2nd December, 1999.

Spending of Central Budget

721. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 57 per cent of the budget was spent between April and August on the Centre's expenditure;

(b) the manner in which Government propose to manage its expenditure in the remaining 43 per cent in the remaining seven months; and

(c) what measures has Government taken to check the wasteful expenditure like use of photocopier machines for photocopying private documents in large quantities, use of photocopier paper for typing letters, purchase of stationery and other items at higher rates by Government offices from NCCP and so on?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) Central Government's expenditure upto August '99 is Rs. 1,01,754.69 crore. This is about 36% of the total budget estimates of Rs. 2,83,882.47 crore for the year 1999-2000. The expenditure flow is not uniform throughout the year. There are occasional variations in the spending pattern of various departments/ministries. Last year, expenditure for the corresponding period was also around 36% of the budget estimates for the year 1998-99.

(c) It is the responsibility of the Heads of various offices to ensure that office properties are not misused and that the prescribed rules/instructions and procedures are adhered to in the procurement of stationery items and other stores etc.